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the **Federal Diary**

Monroney Offers 'Gradual' Retiring Plan for Employees

By Jerry Kluttz

Sen. Mike Monroney (D-Okla.) is sponsoring a plan to permit Federal employees to retire gradually over a period up to five years.



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He wants the Civil Service Commission to experiment with gradual retirement with Federal employees as volunteers before any such plan

is written into law. CSC is definitely interested in his proposal.

The influential Senator, the ranking Democratic member of the Senate Post Office and Civil Service Committee that passes on retirement legislation, feels such a study would be of tremendous interest to both Government and private employees.

"With people living longer and with more of them covered by generous retirement plans," Monroney commented, "we must find better ways to help them adjust to retirement living."

He cited the example of an Oklahoma brokerage firm that recently advertised for messengers. "The applicants weren't young teen-age boys as you'd anticipate," he said, "but several score retirees in the 60s and 70s who just wanted something to do to keep busy."

As the Senator sees it, his gradual retirement plan would set up a transition period between a full and active 5-day, 40-hour week and complete retirement. Some employees, he thought would adjust to retirement much quicker than others so he wouldn't attempt to fix inflexible time limits.

Monroney suggested an employee start his gradual retirement by taking off one day every two weeks, starting perhaps at age 60, and going on from there. He thought CSC should work out details.

James C. O'Brien, HEW's personnel director, first suggested a gradual retirement plan several years ago and it has worked well for a relatively small number of employees who have made use of it.

Civil Service approved the principle of the HEW plan but opposed the cost and rather complicated financing suggested for it. It also concluded that masses of people doing similar work, such as postal employees, laborers, mechanics, typists, etc., could easily retire gradually while it would be more difficult for many others whose jobs require full workweeks, frequently longer than the standard 40 hours.

A top-level committee to be set up by the President to study all Federal retirement systems is certain to consider the Monroney plan.

H. W. "Bill" Brawley is reported to be under consideration for appointment as administrator of Small Business to succeed Eugene P. Foley who apparently is headed for a bigger and better position. He's a former Deputy Postmaster General who is with the Democratic National Committee.